

3. Office Expectations

Employee Practices—Positive Work Culture

Work culture represents a set of beliefs, expectations, ideas, values, attitudes, and behaviors shared by the members of a given work environment. Practicing within a positive work culture will provide you, the student employee, with a strong foundation of both positive work ethics and workplace interactions.

There are, of course, many characteristics or factors that may come together to create a positive work culture. Several of the most prominent characteristics that should be recognized and employed by you, the student employee, are mentioned below.

Motivation

Motivated employees contribute to a positive work environment; they effect the morale of those around them, are more likely to be self-starters and innovators, have strong personal goals, and have a healthy work ethic.

Perspective

It is the mindset or perspective of the individual that sets the foundation for interactions to be defined and for future actions to be declared. Asset-Based thinking lends a positive perspective to any situation. Authors Cramer & Wasiak detail this perspective in the book *Change the Way You See everything*. In the book, they suggest that some key factors for generating a positive change in perspective are:

- Forget perfection
- Shift from seeing a threat to seeing a challenge
- Hindsight + Insight = Foresight
- Focus on strengths more than weaknesses

Win/Win Philosophy

This philosophy is from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, written by Steven R. Covey. He describes this philosophy as

...a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win/Win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying. With a Win/Win solution, all parties feel good about the decision and feel committed to the

action plan. Win/Win sees life as a cooperative, not a competitive arena. Most people tend to think in terms of dichotomies: strong or weak, hardball or softball, win or lose. But that kind of thinking is fundamentally flawed. It's based on power and position rather than on principle. Win/Win is based on the paradigm that there is plenty for everybody, that one person's success is not achieved at the expense or exclusion of the success of others...It's not your way or my way, it's a *better way*.

Not only is our success 'not achieved at the expense...of others', it is fueled by and dependent on others, and it is contingent upon and involves the exercise of self awareness, confidence, desire, and sincerity in and of our relationships with others.

Professionalism

Your behavior in the workplace should exude professionalism. Several factors of good professionalism would include wearing the proper attire, use of proper language, maintain a positive attitude, be honest, and employ ethical behavior. If you want to be a professional, you should act like a professional.

One of the great strategies of success is to act as if you are *already where you want to be*. This means thinking like, talking like, dressing like, acting like, and feeling like the person who has already achieved your goal.

–Jack Canfield, author of *The Success Principles*

Dependability

- Work schedules will be mutually agreed upon.
- If you work less than four hours, check with your supervisor regarding break policy.
- Make arrangements for lunch breaks with your supervisor if you work during lunch.
- If you are ill, call your supervisor as early as possible.

Punctuality

- Check-in or "clock in" when you arrive. Check-out or "clock out" when you leave.
- Arrive on time or call in advance if you are running late.
- Consistent tardiness/absences may be subject to disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

- Information heard or seen in the office or department is confidential.
- Use caution when duplicating information on copy machines or faxing information.

Work Assignments

- Remember your work is your signature. It's a reflection on you, the office and the University.
Sign it with pride.
- When you finish a task or project ask your supervisor for another task. Taking the "initiative" will be appreciated.
- If you don't understand work assignments ask for clarification from your supervisor.

Communication

Praise is a two way street, you are encouraged to praise your supervisor. If you value and pay attention to the feedback that you receive from others and equally share your own feedback, you will find your experience as a student employee far more rewarding.

Use of Resources and Supplies

- Your scheduled time is work time. School work comes first: however, it should be done at home or on your own time.
- Office supplies and equipment are state property and are for office use ONLY.
- Internet use is for work related assignments ONLY.
- Students may purchase a copy card for personal use at the Bookstore, Alkek Library or Auxiliary Services.
- The office telephone is for business calls. Most University offices are equipped with telephones which are placed there at Texas State's expense. These phones are used for University business. Long distance personal and business calls (approved by your supervisor in advance) must be charged to your calling card or made on your cell phone. If you need to receive or make a personal call, check with your supervisor.
- No personal faxes are allowed.
- The personal use of computers, copy machines and other equipment is not allowed.
- Office supplies are for office use ONLY. This includes pens, pencils, legal pad, envelopes, etc.
- Personal visits from friends are discouraged. Visitation time should be limited.